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BACK TO BACK SWEEP! No. 3 Lady Pirates Win 5th National Championship

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BACK TO BACK SWEEP! No. 3 Lady Pirates Win 5th National Championship





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ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, Fla. - At the 2008 NCAA Division II Sports Festival in Houston, the Armstrong Atlantic State women's tennis team won the national title over Lynn. That morning, both Alida Muller-Wehlau and Gabriella Kovacs had match point, with Muller-Wehlau scoring the deciding point in the 5-2 win.

This year, it was Kovacs' turn.

The junior from Szazhalombatta, Hungary, closed out a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 win over Jessica Yanoff at No. 4 singles to clinch the No. 3-ranked Lady Pirates' fifth NCAA Division II Women's Tennis National Championship, 5-2 again, over No. 2-ranked Lynn (28-1) on Saturday afternoon at Sanlando Park in Altamonte Springs, Fla.

The Pirates (28-1) entered singles play needing just three wins, but Lynn won the first set in four of the six singles matches.

AASU picked up points at No. 1 singles when top-ranked Sona Novakova defeated No. 11-ranked Katerina Jiskrova, 6-3, 6-3, and No. 16-ranked Alida Muller-Wehlau knocked off No. 15-ranked Magdalena Ekert, 6-4, 6-0.

Tessie Salame notched a 6-1, 6-0 win over Alisa Kagukina at No. 6 singles, but the Lady Pirates were able to push the other three singles matches into third sets.

The Lady Pirates took a 2-1 lead after doubles play. No. 2-ranked Martina Beckmann and Alida Muller-Wehlau picked up an impressive 8-2 victory at No. 1 doubles over fifth-ranked Katerina Jiskrova and Eleonora Ianonozzi in a matchup of top-five ranked duos. No. 7-ranked Gabriella Kovacs and Sona Novakova followed with an 8-5 win over No. 24-ranked Magdalena Ekert and Alisson Siaci at No. 2 doubles.

No. 12-ranked Tina Ronel and Kathleen Henry fell behind at No. 3 doubles, 6-3, but battled back to force a tiebreaker. Laynn's Jessica Yanoff and Tessie Salame picked up the win, 9-8 (7-1).

AASU now joins BYU-Hawaii (2002, 2003) as the only teams to win Division II Back-to-Back National Championships with both the men's and the women's teams. The Lady Pirates have also won back-to-back titles twice in school history, the first coming in 1995 and 1996. AASU evened its mark in NCAA DII National Championship contests at 5-5 - this was the Lady Pirates 10th appearance in the final. Lynn was making its seventh appearance in the finals and is 3-4 in those contests.

The win also avenged a 5-4 loss at Lynn back in March, the only loss this season for the Lady Pirates.



ARMSTRONG STATE UNIVERSITY

11935 ABERCORN STREET, SAVANNAH, GA 31419

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